

Certification of Claims Report

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Purpose of the report

1. This report introduces the annual report from our external auditors Grant Thornton on their findings from the signing off of the Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim for 2016/17.

Recommendations

2. The Audit Committee is asked to note the contents of the Certification of Claim Report for 2016/17.

Introduction

3. The Certification of Claims Report is included within the remit of the Audit Committee under its terms of reference as follows:

“To consider the effectiveness of SSDC’s risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and corruption arrangements and seek assurance from management that action has been taken”

“To consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies and seek assurance from management that action has been taken”

Subsidy Claim

4. The external auditors certify the subsidy claim for the Housing Benefit Scheme. The report from Grant Thornton is attached at Appendix A. The total claim was £43,092,604 and because there were errors the claim has been qualified. However, as members can see the amendments required were very minor. We will continue to provide training and further testing on the areas highlighted in the report.

Financial Implications

5. The final outcome of the claim was an additional payment from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) of £19,573 – which is a very small percentage change to the overall claim total and not a significant concern for financial control and reporting.
6. The indicative scale fee set by PSAA for the Council for 2016/17 was £10,493. Work undertaken is subject to a fee variation due to extra work being carried out. This is currently under discussion with management, and subject to agreement with PSAA. We will report the outcome from this process in a future Audit Committee.

Background Papers

Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim